

The  
**Red Man's Religion**  
AND  
**My Happy Career**

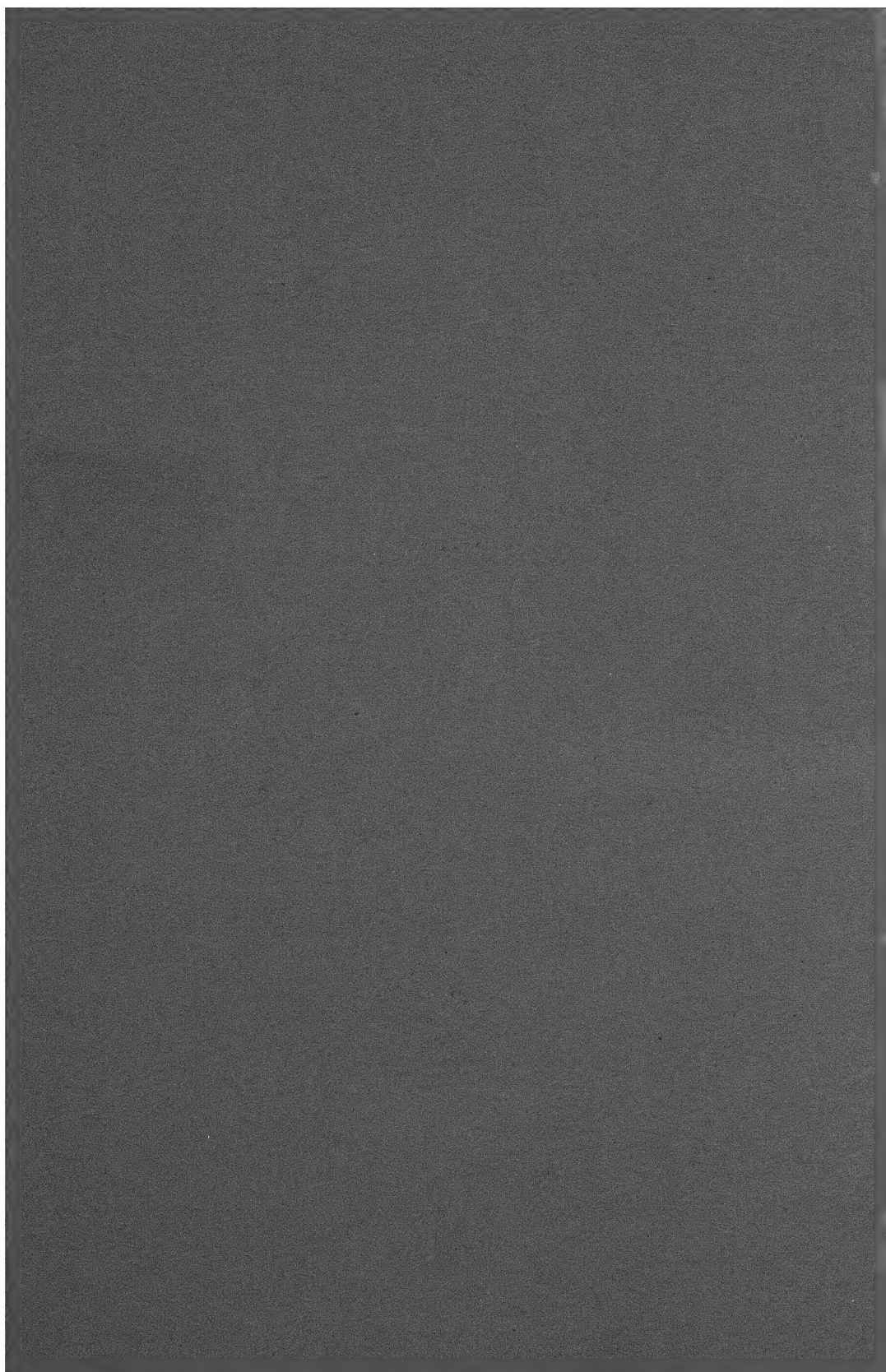
BY  
W. E. H. STOKES



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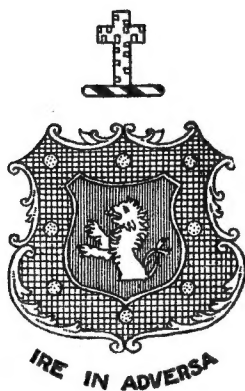
THE RED MAN'S RELIGION  
AND  
FIVE TRUE TALES OF MY  
HAPPY CAREER



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THE RED MAN'S RELIGION  
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FIVE TRUE TALES OF MY HAPPY CAREER

BY  
W. E. H. STOKES  
AUTHOR OF 'ARE OUR INDIANS PAGANS.'



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By W. E. H. STOKES

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To  
SIR HENRY E. STOKES, K.C.S.I.  
MY FATHER AND  
MY BEST FRIEND  
THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY  
DEDICATED

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# THE RED MAN'S RELIGION

## CHAPTER I

In approaching this very difficult business of inquiry into another man's religious belief, I would ask you to do a rather difficult thing, that is to banish from your mind the teachings which you all must have received from your clergy as indispensable to the Christian doctrine. To do this you will be committing what I at all events was taught to be a sin, but in order to present an absolutely white page for the reception of new impressions, which I hope to record, it is necessary to do this thing. When I did so, I may have done wrong; if so, *mea culpa*.

Whether you will benefit from the process or not is of course a matter for speculation; but I think that the mere fact of reflection on these problems of religion has done me good, and I do not see why it should not equally do good to any fair-minded person. I trust that the presentation of the facts may be of benefit not only to the lay reader for whom I write particularly, but also to the clergy whom I am criticising. The one thing that I have the greatest horror of in this life is the fear of being misunderstood. If at any point in the writing I do not make myself clear, I would ask you to attribute it to my inexperience as a writer. It is only my second attempt on such a serious theme.

A few, and a very few, of the following words are repeated from my former statements, for the sufficient reason that it is impossible for me to vary them.

In attacking the ignorant orthodoxy of the day—I borrow the phrase—kindly bear in mind that I attack the ignorance but not the orthodoxy. The spectacle of another's ignorance is not blissful to any of us. You will be wiser concerning the Religion of our own Indians if you have the patience to read this writing through.

What is the meaning of the word Pagan? This, after all that has been written and said on the subject of the Religion of our Indians, is an important point, a question which I propose to deal with now. The dictionary says that a Pagan is a "heathen and an idolater," but I think that the more generally accepted interpretation at the present time is this:—"Non-Christian." Certainly this is the meaning of the word according to the Missionaries, who are undoubtedly responsible for the placing of the stigma which is conveyed by the word Pagan, at all events to the minds of those who accept Christianity as the only true religion. Christians as a rule, are prone to dismiss immediately, and almost without consideration, the fact that other beliefs have and do exist which satisfy the souls of their fellow creatures. I hope to be able to show the many peculiarities of the Religion of the followers of Kitchee Manitou which have satisfied the aspirations of the Cree and Blackfoot Nations, for who shall say how long. It is a belief so easy and natural that it demands no faith, and yet contains in the phenomena of nature that promise of immortal life which is dear to every man.

A letter reached me a little while ago which said: "There is probably no religion in the world to-day so untouched, untainted by civilization and so unknown as that of the Red Indian of pure blood. Up to the year 1850, little or nothing was recorded by any man upon the subject." I ask the reader is it not in the interests of humanity at large that we should not rest until the matter is definitely investigated and stripped of the obscurity which now envelopes and disfigures some

very beautiful conceptions of our Maker. Surely this would work for good both to the Red Man himself and also to the man who will make the investigation in a proper and intelligent manner. Certainly the fear of evil should not restrain us, for if the Christian has all the revelations of divine wisdom, then he has naught to fear. But if the believer in Kitchee Manitou has also received a measure of the Wisdom of God, are we Christians the ones who should affect to ignore it? God forbid.

With hardly an exception the missionaries, both Catholic and Protestant, that I have met with, approach the Indian they desire to convert, thoroughly imbued with the idea that what the so-called Pagan believes in is such a weird, childish tissue of fancies that it is hardly worthy the serious attention of any sane man. After eighteen years of travelling through this country, I have yet to meet with the clergyman who had the least idea of what he had to combat in the minds of the Indians, or had even ascertained if there was any mutual belief that he and the Indian both held, which might be used as a starting point to work from. It will be admitted that, as a rule, to the missionary, the Indian's belief is Anathema Maranatha, and it is with the hope and intention of helping those missionaries that this piece of advice is tendered. Have they not reason to be discouraged? May not a mere layman presume to advise those who are his spiritual advisors? If I may not speak I discard them as my guides. I know the Indian better than many of those missionaries, have seen "Pagans" under stranger skies, have lived among them, hunted with them, talked with every tribe that I could reach as soon as I could speak a little of their language. Have I a right to speak on behalf of those poor Indians? Whatever the answer may be, here and now are the facts. I will interpose an entreaty that if anyone among those who may peruse my words knows

anything about this subject, he will at once communicate with me direct, as a few have already done. Let us add the sum of our knowledge together and record it all. Send me facts and evidences so that the object I have already spoken of may be attained, namely, that the Religion of the Red Man may no longer be termed "Pagan," that it may prove advantageous to those students capable of eliciting and extracting the poetical, soulful, glorious ideals which formerly were the priceless possessions of a population whose descent is not even now established. We may not know when their traditions began, but this at least we may accomplish—we may record the information. Every form of religious belief must be of interest to humanity. Add your grain of knowledge to mine, if you will, and help me to record this Worship of God-in-nature.

Of legends and fairy tales I offer you none, though there are many yet unrecorded. I would ask of what real value are they? In the history of our own Church of Christ, can any man draw a definite line between a superstition and a fixed religious belief? A creed is what must be believed, a legend is what ought to be studied, a fairy tale is an effort of imagination, yet the latter may have been inspired by the Great Giver of our imaginations Himself, naming Him God the Father, Jehovah, Kitchee Manitou, or whatever you will.

Now to state briefly the beliefs of the Cree. They believe in two deities, the Great and the Small; the Great they call Kitchee Manitou, which has the power for all good, and the Small Matchee Manitou, which has the power for all evil. Now the Indian will submit supplications and make great sacrifices through a mediator to Kitchee Manitou, and what the mediator is I will explain later. The Cree does not care to pray direct to Kitchee Manitou, but he will, remembering his own innate baseness, go through almost anything in order to secure the interest of an intercessor who, he knows, will have

more influence with Kitchee Manitou than his own miserable self. The Cree apparently believes that his own influence with Kitchee Manitou is just as great as anything's or any one's, except a Spirit's. He believes that a Spirit is the invisible essence which formerly animated the body of a human being or an animal while living, and he believes that there is a spirit in every inanimate object capable of casting a shadow when the sun shines. Now in all the religions that I have studied I will go so far as to say that nowhere do I find a more beautiful and poetical idea than this last. We know that all things above the ground must go through their appointed periods of bloom and of decay. Nothing lasts forever, even the granite mountains crumble and alter their conformation under the devastating influence of time. So that when the Indian says there must be a portion of the spirit of God, or a soul in inanimate things as well as in those bodies which we term living bodies, it seems to be a very natural and easy thing to believe that there may be a spirit of a stick or a rock, the prairie grass or the mountains. All of these spirits alike were called into being by Kitchee Manitou, and as time goes on will one and all be recalled to His presence. This is the true resurrection of the dead. The spirit of God endows all objects in nature and being in itself immortal can never pass into any oblivion, but in fullness of time will be gathered again into that great source from which it originated.

## CHAPTER II

How does the Cree expect to bridge the chasm which lies between himself and his Creator? By what means will his petition reach the ear of the only one who has power over the future, power to escape events according to His will? What means has Kitchee Manitou granted to his creatures? It is by dreams, which the Cree believes He sends from His benevolent disposition in order that He Himself may have the gratification of granting if possible the requests of those who trust in Him. In every country and in every age dreams have had a very strong and extraordinary influence upon the minds of mankind. The Cree says Kitchee Manitou sent him the gift of speech, and also of thought. He also believes just as firmly that he owes his dreams to the same giver. For every man Kitchee Manitou will appoint some mediator or spirit of some departed being animate or inanimate, to whom the man who desires to pray must apply himself, and it is by a dream that he will reveal to the Cree that particular spirit which might be defined as his patron saint. He believes that the spirits themselves have no personal power to grant him anything, but are employed as it were by Kitchee Manitou to signify to the Cree his own particular mediator. Therefore it is to that spirit of which the Indian has frequently dreamed that he will address his prayers, and also devote his sacrifices, asking that spirit to present his petitions to Kitchee-Manitou, who alone has power to give the suppliant those things of which he may be desirous, whether it is for success in hunting, in love, and even for power to work harm to his enemies.



It is also an extraordinary thing, and yet how natural it is, that these people though they may be dying, will none of them pray or make sacrifices more than twice a year, because they fear to intrude their unworthy selves upon the notice of their patron spirit, and are also reluctant to have a petition presented to their Great God more frequently than this, owing to the very reverend love in which they hold His very idea. The Indians relate to one another all the dreams that visit them and as soon as it is remarked that a man or woman frequently dreams of the same object or person, the others recognize that individual as one who has received notification from Kitchee Manitou of the mediator which he or she should employ when they desire to pray. In this way a great many of the names that the Indians bear are explained by the fact that they are named after the spirits of the thing, person or animal which they have dreamed of so frequently. Of course this does not apply to all their names which do not descend from father to son.

Remember, if in the future you should at any time observe one of these so-called Pagan Indians at his devotions, he is really doing the same thing as a Roman Catholic who prays to his patron saint, asking that saint to approach on his behalf the very same God Almighty whom we believe in, but whom the Indian, so poor, vile and wretched a creature, does he conceive himself to be, dare not, and never will address in any other way than that indicated. Christians believe in only one mediator, in one intercessor, in that one great sacrifice the death of Jesus Christ; the Indian knows nothing of Him and is inclined to regard His incarnation as pure, human-made fiction.

Once we grant the postulate of the spirit of God, or immortal essence permeating everything animate and inanimate, which should not be difficult to do, there is absolutely nothing in these Pagans' belief which asks for any surrender of the

reason, or which demands the great and childlike faith required of the Christians. We Christians believe that this surrender of reason and childlike faith is necessary, not I think because of any superior revelation granted to Christians compared with that given to the Indians, but simply because we recognize in ourselves many things which are contrary to our reason, but still we accept these things as true without anything in the way of evidence.

#### A CEREMONY.

Now, in order to show how little paganism there is in the worship of these much maligned people, I will describe shortly the ordinary sacrifice dance, which is a religious ceremony, but before doing so it is necessary to point out the strange influence which the magnetic north pole has had on the religious ceremonies of the Crees. They must have observed the influence of the north pole on suspended iron or steel and been quite unable to account for it. They have naturally made use of this phenomenon in their religious ceremonies.

Now we will take the case of a man who has been continually dreaming of some spirit and is desirous of praying to Kitchee Manitou. The utensils of the ceremony are, the pipe, the sweet or incense grass, the tobacco and the food or consecrated dish.

The pipe is used in this manner. The petitioner if alone, will not ask for the services of another man in presenting his petition, but as a rule he will endeavor to get a noted orator or some other friend or relative to do the actual speaking of the prayer, so that he will be praying through the medium of his neighbor to the spirit, asking the spirit to present his petition to Kitchee Manitou. In the case of getting a friend to pray for him, the friend will take the pipe in both hands by bowl, and raising it reverently above his head, he will point

the stem to the north pole, then, still keeping the pipe above his head, he will revolve the bowl for a few seconds. The petitioner must indicate to him in which direction the spirit of which he dreamt so frequently, appeared to him. If the praying man fails to indicate the right direction the first time, he would again point the stem to the north and try some other point of the compass, until at last the petitioner indicates the exact location in which the spirit, to whom he desires to pray for its intercession with Kitchee Manitou appeared. When the direction of the mediator has been ascertained, a portion of the incense grass is ignited and through the smoke all the tobacco and all the food must be passed. This tobacco and food must be completely consumed or else the prayer to the spirit will fail. The food and tobacco need not necessarily be consumed by the petitioner alone but will be partaken of by all the people present. The amount of the consecrated food and tobacco varies only according to amount of sacrifice which the petitioner is willing to make. If he is wealthy he will sacrifice more. If he thinks that the spirit of which he has been dreaming has some power for him, he will be inclined to sacrifice more of his worldly goods. If on the other hand the benefits to be derived do not appear to be so great, then he will perhaps only have a small portion of food and tobacco consecrated, but in any case the whole of the consecrated food and tobacco must be consumed before the conclusion of the sacrifice dance, which I am now describing. Therefore the revolting spectacle of an Indian gorging himself at a dance is probably as nauseous and revolting to the Indian himself as it is to the white spectator. All the tobacco that goes through the smoke of the incense grass must be consumed and also the food, having been consecrated in the same manner, must be consumed to the last crumb.

Now we have the petitioner sitting in his lodge or tent. He sits on the left hand side of the door if he is in his own

tent. Next to him will be the praying man, and the others present will take their seats around the fire. The pipe is filled, passed through the smoke of the incense grass, handed round, everybody taking a few whiffs and passing it to his neighbour. The pipe having gone round the circle, the praying man asks the petitioner privately what he desires him to pray for. Then the food and tobacco is also consecrated by being passed through the incense smoke, and the praying man very reverently finds the direction of the spirit in the manner indicated with the pipe stem. Having got this direction, perhaps after several attempts, from the petitioner, he will then begin praying, not to Kitchee Manitou, but to that spirit which the petitioner has informed him of. This being done, it only remains to consume everything consecrated and the sacrifice dance must not cease until this is done. Then the dance is over, the sacrifice is made and the petitioner goes away trusting that his petitions will meet with success.

#### MISSIONARIES' METHODS.

I want here and now to disclaim any intention of making an attack upon any missionary or missionaries. I am too much of an old timer in this country to attempt any such foolish task. Other old timers and travellers in this country will bear me out when I say that were anyone in distress, be he red or white, no better friend may be found than among the missionaries of all denominations. To my personal knowledge, in the year of the Klondyke rush via Edmonton route, very many white men were assisted to leave the inhospitable country lying to the north and west of the Great Slave Lake. These men would not be alive to-day if it were not for the assistance which they received from the missionaries. Their zeal and piety are well known; the sacrifices they have made will perhaps never be known. Their devotion has

induced them to relinquish everything which they might have enjoyed had they not determined to go out into the wilderness to carry the Word of God to those that dwell therein. But at the same time the fact cannot be lost sight of that so sure are they, not only of the points of their own doctrine and dogma, but also of the methods which they use to present these beliefs of theirs, that any advice from a layman is listened to politely, blandly, but at the same time is utterly passed over and disregarded as being offered by one who is not in possession of the facts, who could not by any possibility be able to advise such a man as a missionary or cleric conceives himself to be. It is this attitude on the part of priests and clergy generally which to my mind is positively obnoxious. This point might be perhaps well illustrated by the recital of a conversation which I had with a reverend cleric who resides in this city. This gentleman had perused my essay in *The Canadian Magazine* on this same subject, and I asked him what he thought about it. He replied: "I don't like to answer you until I have read it again." "Well," I said, "have I done any harm by writing and setting forth what I know to be the religious belief of a so-called Pagan people?" In a slightly patronizing and supercilious tone he said: "Oh, no *you* have not done any *harm*," which conveyed the idea to my mind that what I had said really did not matter. "Well," I said, "do you consider this essay as an attack upon missionaries?" He replied: "It is certainly not what you would call an encouragement to them." I said no more, there was no more necessary. It was perfectly evident to me that this gentleman's attitude was the conventional one. Should it not be an encouragement to missionaries if a man who has probably seen the other side of the Indian's nature, other, I mean than that which the clergyman might see, indicates another path which might be tried, some other means which might prove efficacious in order to gain

the end which the layman had probably as much at heart as the clergyman? But no, friendly criticism of the ways of the missionary seems to be practically useless, so far that is, as to the prospects of changing the missionary's methods are concerned.

I will just add this, that nothing is further from my mind in writing this, than to place any obstacle in the way of missionaries or to cast reflections upon the efforts of a band of men and women whom I respect thoroughly and would help by every means in my power because they do try to convert to the best religion of all those Indians who have been so long debarred from the blessings of Christianity. It is the missionaries' method that I attack.

### CHAPTER III

Everybody knows that civilization following Christianity has been the ruin to a very great extent of all our Indian nations, and the efforts of the Christian missionaries appear to me to have been directed towards the undoing of the destruction which civilization has brought about, but their methods have not borne fruit.

The Indian cares nothing whether the ruin of his people has been caused by civilization or Christianity, for he can see only too plainly the effect of the contact of civilization or Christianity upon his own and his people's well-being.

As I said in the beginning of this writing the object I have in view is to place on record the facts that I have ascertained, to compare my knowledge with other enquirers along the same line and in the end to submit the facts to the Dominion Government with the object of removing the word Pagan from the official records of the Department of Indian Affairs.

For my purposes I think perhaps it will be as well to consider first of all what earlier writers have recorded with regard to this question. Among the most interesting of these writers is one Alexander Henry. In his work "Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories," edited by James Bain, I find some extremely interesting foot notes and a preface by the latter gentleman, which throw light upon the subject of the Indian religion in general, and in particular upon that of the Five Nations who originated in Eastern Canada. I have here first of all a very curious extract to make, which I will give in full. It comes in the preface by Mr. Bain where he is relating the story which is told by an Indian Chief

named Canassatego. This man was the chief with whom Henry had met while working at his trade as a mender of gun locks.

"They believe spirits ramble about under the earth in a country where there is only a kind of twilight. That in that country there are also the spirits of birds, beasts and fishes and even of trees and plants. That each of these spirits can see and handle without hands, but if he comes again above ground he finds he cannot see the sun or move even a grain of sand without eyes and hands, and therefore he seizes the first opportunity of getting a new body by entering and possessing an embryo just forming in its mother's womb, from which moment he forgets everything but love to his country. The returning spirits of birds, beasts and fishes they say, do not forget anything; the birds retain the memory of the ways of walking, flying, copulating and building of nests; the beasts of walking, coupling and swimming, etc., and the fishes of swimming and other actions which the great spirits first taught them and therefore need no fresh teaching in these particulars."

I have purposely given the above story or legend regarding man's origin somewhat out of order because I have not been able to trace this belief at the present time among the Crees.

I might say that I intend to go rather exhaustively through this book of Alexander Henry's not because of any intrinsic merits it may possess but rather because it seems to me to be a typical book written by a layman and fur-trader. As for Henry himself at the time this book was written he appears to have been a man whom nobody would respect. He had no manners, his customs were beastly and the less said about his morals the better. However he afterwards developed into a very worthy and even eminent merchant of Montreal, and like many another wild lad, afterwards proved himself to be a man of mettle.



The next interesting thing with regard to this book is this: the editor, Mr. Bain, has stated in one of the notes that the Cree language is a dialect of the Algonquin. By which one would infer that the original nation of Indians were located in the East, whereas all records tend to show that the original migration of mankind on the North American continent was from the West eastward. Therefore it is far more than likely that the Algonquin language is a dialect of the Cree, and it is not very much farther for us to conclude that the beliefs of the more eastern Indians were derived from traditions of the Western Indian nations.

Professor Mahaffy of Trinity College, Dublin, who is of course an ordained man, was good enough to write me a letter in answer to my inquiries on this most debatable theory. His opinion is that mankind was original at various parts of the earth, whether simultaneously or not he does not state. He points to the Australian on the one hand, and to the North American on the other, asking why our red men should not have come into being in the same manner as the Australian? He thinks, however, that at one time there must have been land almost all the way across the North Atlantic over which hardy travellers might have crossed via Iceland. Geological evidences are not lacking in support of the theory.

But the investigations of American ethnologists look rather to the west for the origin of this human migration, and I agree in this theory although my opinion is of little weight. The conformation of skulls and anatomical researches of this nature are matters beyond my limited education. Let those better qualified to speak decide for me the point, as to where did our Red Aborigines come from.

It is however interesting to note here the story of the creation as related by this same Canassatego. Here follows a condensed version of the creation.

"Our good Manitta raised the country of the five nations

out of the great waters and said how fine a country is this, I will make red men the best of men to enjoy it. With five handfuls of red seeds like the eggs of flies did he strew the fertile fields of Onondaga. Little worms came out of the seeds and penetrated the earth where the spirits who never yet had seen the light entered into and united with them. Manitta watered the earth with his rain and the sun warmed it; the worms with the spirits in them grew and moved the light earth that covered them. After nine moons they came forth perfect boys and girls. Manitta covered them with his mantle of warm purple cloud and nourished them with milk from his finger ends. He nursed them nine summers and nine summers he taught them how to live; in the meantime he made for their use, trees, plants and animals until their country was covered with woods and filled with creatures. Then he told them as they each came from a different seed that they were five nations. but they were all brethren for he made them all. The beasts, birds and fishes I have given you all in common. As I have loved you and taken care of you so do you love and take care of one another. You will defend your country from other nations and from the children of other Manittas, keep possession of it for yourself while the sun and moon give light and the water runs in the river. I am now about to leave you for I have great affairs in distant places and I cannot again attend so long to the nursing of children. After other good advice and promising to come and visit his creatures this Manitta wrapped himself in a bright cloud and went like a swift arrow to the sun where his brethren rejoiced at his return."

The narrative of Canassatego goes on to describe how misfortune fell upon the five nations, owing to the wickedness which they developed when they began to trade with one another, each nation endeavoring to get as much of the commodities of the other as they could with the smallest possible pay-

ments of their own goods, instead of sharing and giving away as among brothers they were bound to do whenever they had a superfluity. The story of the destruction in their country through a great drought which followed a tremendous flood is given, but is only remarkable as a repetition of the tradition of the destruction of the inhabitants of the world which is common in all countries. The individual according to the Indians who was saved at the time of the deluge among the Western Algonquin peoples was named Nanibozhu, and this hero God is known in the legends of many Indian nations in Canada and he is supposed still to reside on an island off the North shore of Lake Superior. The meaning of Nanibozhu seems to be translated most accurately as the Great Hare. Some of these nations seem to believe that he was their original creator, but not the Crees.

There are a few points worth noting in this story of the creation according to Canassatego. You will notice that he starts by saying "our good Manitta," as though there were other Manitta and also Manitta that were not good. At the present time I am unable to find that the Pagan Cree believes in more than one good God and that his name Kitchee-Manitou means only that he is great and not greater than any other God except Matchee-Manitou.

In the same story it says that on Manitta's return to the sun his brethren rejoiced; this of course shows that Canassatego and his people must have believed that there were very many Gods all of whom were responsible for the creation of a nation or a country. I am unable to find that the Cree believed in anything of this sort.

There is also mention in this story of "other nations and from the children of other Manittas." There is no doubt in my mind that the Cree believes only in one God of good and one of evil. The good or great God created all the world and all the people, by the assembling of vapors which deposited earth, and the first man sprung from the earth.

## CHAPTER IV

Dr. MacLean's book, "Canadian Savage Folk" is a very interesting compilation by a scholar and student principally taken from records and writings of others. Much as I admire his work, I am bound to say that like all the authors on the subject of our Indian population, whenever he touches upon religion he is liable, and in point of fact does fall into errors. For instance, he says that among the Blackfeet at their religious ceremonies they point the pipe stem first of all to the sun and afterwards to the four points of the compass. He does not say why, and I can assure the reader that the pipe is used in their ceremonies in exactly the same manner as it is used among the Crees.

For thus quoting from these two books I have no apologies to make, because the extracts I have made are interesting as any theory about man's origin must be.

I have by me an article written by a Mr. Lawrence, factor of the Hudsons Bay Company which is correct and true, but he makes the very common mistake of mixing religion and medicine. He makes a special point of an occurrence which he witnessed where a sick Indian child was dying. Instead of allowing the missionaries to administer remedies the parents of this child insisted on sticking to the Indian herbalist doctor's treatment. The fact that the child died does not prove that the remedies of the missionary would have been more efficacious. Mr. Lawrence takes for granted that it was superstition and savagery that induced the parents of this child to refuse the missionary's medical aid, whereas it was

probably simply due to the fact that they had more confidence in the native doctor than in that missionary. There is probably no subject on which so much nonsense has been written as upon the subject of what are called medicine men. They are simply herbalists. The praying man and the medicine man are entirely different; what MacLean calls Shaman are of course jugglers and perform many marvellous tricks such as being tied up with strong cords and presently appearing outside a tee-pee free, but to say that those men are priests or anything of that sort is wide of the mark; the religious and medical practices of the Cree are just as distinct as they are among us, and ought never to have been confused. As for the drumming Mr. Lawrence refers to, everyone knows the soothing effect of rhythm upon the nerves. No doubt the Indians must have observed it.

The other day I heard a strange remark from a sincere and earnest Presbyterian Church worker. She said, "You cannot help an Indian anyway, he always goes back as soon as he gets out of the Indian school." When I asked her if she contributed anything to our Indian Mission Fund she answered that she did so reluctantly. When one reflects upon her mental attitude towards this question it is obvious that her discouragement was due to the fact that the results of our Indian Missions are almost an absolutely negligible quantity.

One does not hear of immense sums of money and expenditure of lives being poured out in an effort to convert Unitarians. These people were originally closer to the Unitarian people in their beliefs than to any other modern religion that I know of. In point of fact they are Unitarians with their beautiful theory of spiritual intercession added, and also of the presence of a portion of God's spirit in everything in Nature.

Having laid down this axiom, namely, that I do not attack the missionaries, but their methods, I will proceed to set

forth the fallacies and the faults of those methods. I propose to attack their methods by every means in my power, by writing, by speaking, by ridicule and with earnestness, and more than all by the production of facts. I will also for my facts, go to the records produced by the missionaries themselves. I claim, and hope to prove, that about 80 per cent. of the results they show are paper results. The rolls of communicants to which they are wont to point with such pride contain very many more names than the number of Christians who are supposed to bear those names. The experience which I have had leads me to say without fear that I have not met a male Indian of pure blood between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-five who was a sincere Christian. In the year 1892 when I first came to this country there was an annual camp of the Blood Indians on their reserve near MacLeod. On this occasion there must have been upwards of a thousand Indians camped quite close to the agency and about equally close to the Anglican Mission Church. Some years prior to this the Methodist people had disposed of their mission, sold out in fact all their property and interests to the English Church, and therefore the missionaries had had a good many years in which to make converts to Christianity. On the particular Sunday when this annual camp took place how many of these Indians attended the Divine Service of their newly adopted religion? Of old men, three; old women, nine; of men, none; of children, I cannot say how many but there were a great many brought by the teachers and workers of the English Church Clergyman. Now is this a result for which the mission should be grateful? I say no. In fact one cannot regard it as anything but a most dismal failure especially when you reflect upon how much time, labor, money, and it may be for all I know lives had been expended in a noble and unselfish manner by the missionaries of these two denominations.

The violent methods of the missionaries—I use the word violent in a certain sense—are too well known, that is to say, their zeal has somewhat overrun their discretion. We have had a very deplorable result in the case of Japan. Two Japanese of distinguished rank advised Mr. Preston, whose report is on record in Ottawa, on the subject of white missions to their own nation. Put in the shortest possible way we find that the recommendations of the Japanese were that the missionaries should confine their attention to preaching, and to preaching only the word of God with which they were entrusted. They should not then endeavour to educate in secular matters but confine themselves to their one and only purpose. Surely that purpose is enough for any friar, for any evangelist. This method, I think I am safe in saying has not yet been tried. The missionary must support himself and his family or be supported, but if he could only secure that support without trading, without bartering with his intended converts, how much more likely he would be to secure their attention? That the missionaries do trade I am certain of, particularly with the Indians whom we are observing. To go back to the word education in a secular sense, there is no doubt great benefits are to be conferred by educating them in manual arts but this class of education is entirely outside the province of a minister of the gospel and then again, in order to educate, the missionary of this country appears to consider that the parents must be put away as much as possible and as far as possible from their children. I have seen babies four years old so separated from their parents and surely this is contrary to all our own ideas in educating our own children. The missionary replies that the visits of the parents are to be discouraged because they exercise a harmful influence upon their children.

At the same time they will tell you that the youngest child will imbibe, so to speak, from his mother those Christian

principles which we hold so dear. This method will never tend to convert the Indian parents.

The Boarding School for Indians is to my mind, a colossal mistake, but at any rate children should not be placed in the Boarding School at such tender ages as one sees them in very nearly all the mission schools throughout this Western country.



## CHAPTER V

Now some might conceive that in order to support this attack of mine upon the methods of missionaries I should give a specific case. It is in my power to do so. My reason for refraining is this. The mission in which I gained most of my experience was one upon the Saskatchewan River where I and my companion were received in a spirit of the most generous hospitality. My companion had cut his foot with an axe and arrived at the reserve in a high septic fever. Our first refuge was the North-West Mounted Police Barracks where Sergeant Hall who was in command of the post did everything possible for us. My companion was nearly dead at the time when we received an invitation to move to this English Church Mission. Kindness was bestowed upon us by every white person in that settlement, therefore, it is my plain duty to refrain from stating anything which might tend to besmirch the cloth which this missionary wears. He is a man that I could not respect after I knew of his methods but at the same time I will say as an old timer that I could not have met with a better welcome, not even from my own dear Irish people.

Now, I need not asseverate or labor the point. I tell the truth as far as I can. If any should accuse me of cowardice in not bringing forward the proofs which are at my command, it will not worry me if they should gain a wrong impression of my character. Simply and briefly, I am not capable of the meanness. It is quite sufficient for me to

say that I had ample opportunity of corroborating my belief that the missionaries are working in a wrong manner.

You will perhaps think that in thus writing about the missionaries it has little to do with my main object of proving that these Indians are not pagans. I think that no better witness could be brought forward than that of an educated Anglican priest whose name is Canon Fletcher, himself an Indian, who has stated to a personal friend of my own that he never observed the least trace of idolatry. Now, here we come to a point that it is necessary for me again to touch upon in order to illustrate to you how very much more valuable two or three impressions gathered at first hand are than all the gleanings from the writers, from Confucius to Kant, from Socrates to Professor Sir George Stokes, from Moses to Professor Mahaffy. Taking the quotation I am about to make in Rusken's *Aratra Pentelici* in that part of it about idolatry as an illustration of the futility of thus trying to glean you will find the famous passage which reads (the 63rd paragraph) "But the elementary causes, both of this frivolity in you, and of worse than frivolity in older persons, are the two forms of deadly Idolatry which are now all but universal in England.

"The first of these is the worship of the Eidolon or Fantasy of Wealth;—which is briefly to be defined as the servile apprehension of an active power in Money, and the submission to as the God of our life.

"The second elementary cause of the loss of our nobly imaginative faculty, is the worship of the letter, instead of the Spirit, in what we chiefly accept as the ordinance and teaching of Deity; and the apprehension of a healing sacredness in the act of reading the Book whose primal commands we refuse to obey."

Now in pondering these words and weighing them the first thing that strikes me is that this is not my idea of idolatry

at all. Idolatry is the worship of a man made image, representing an attribute of God. Presumptuous as it may seem that I should criticise a man of the calibre of William Rusken, I can only say that I have bought his book and with that purchase goes the right to speak my mind. Is there any trace of idolatry even in the sense of Rusken's words among these so-called Pagans? I say no. That being so it disposes once and for all of the sub-division of the definition in the dictionary of the word Pagan, namely, an idolater.

Next, I take the other subdivision, the word "heathen." What does this mean? A heathen is anything except a Christian. In the usually accepted meaning at all events, it is identical with the word Pagan, that is, it means nowadays, non-Christian. Non-Christian, these people are; there is no doubt about that, but taking the original meaning of the word Pagan it means not so much that they have no religion other than that of Jesus Christ but that this is the religion of a people who never even heard of him.

There are many Indians who are called Pagans who have heard of our Lord, not once, but for their lives long and still refuse to accept Him. It is not as if the word of God had not reached them but it has been presented to their consideration for say three generations, taking a generation as twenty-five years, but they have refused it, unfortunately it may be for them. And why? I think that the explanation may be simply this that in their own belief, in their own religion they have found all things necessary to their condition, believing as they do that happiness cannot be attained because it is already in their possession, believing also that if they erred it merely means that they will take a longer time to complete the circle on the perimeter of which is their originator and Creator, and on which circle the great essence of all Nature is eternally flowing in a glorious flood, thorough life and death. Evidences of their faith are tangible. They

grasp the bole of a tree in their hands; they enclose and hold something which has the same immortality as they themselves possess. Here, I would ask you which is the more beautiful in the sight of God, that person or thing which has fulfilled its purpose and become as one with the harmony of nature or that incomplete creation which is merely at one stage of its journey?

How are we to know if this is true except only by analogy? It is impossible we may say to argue on a subject like natural history by analogy but at the same time bearing in mind always the beliefs of these Indians in the permeation of everything that they see and touch and know about with the immortal essence of God, we should have no difficulty in drawing a true conclusion even by the process of analogy. The beautiful body of a living man and the verdant tree covered with what we consider the loveliness of bloom, whether are these the more beautiful in God's sight than the corpse of our dear departed or the rotting trunk? Having completed its purpose I think we could safely say that the dead body would please our God more than the sight of our imperfections in this life. In the same way all through nature, even the dead tree which we consider so unsightly, even the granite rock uncovered by any vegetation, pointing to the sky in an angular manner which is unpleasing to our sense of form and line, having fulfilled the purpose of our God must also be more pleasing to His sight though we may consider the remains a ruin.

Now, the only thing left for me to do it seems is to inquire whom I may interest in this matter, how am I to achieve this purpose of mine in getting the alteration made in our official records.

The party to address of course is the Head of the Indian Department and I had great hopes after the publication of a book authorised by that department, written by Mrs. Amelia

Paget, that some steps were in contemplation, but a long time has now gone by since this book was first circulated and as yet I have not heard of any of our members mentioning the subject in the House. All Governments of course are naturally slow and dignified in their movements, but perhaps without my knowledge steps have been taken to call these red men something more appropriate than Pagans. The Minister of the Interior is a friend of mine for many years and I can imagine him saying under his famous moustaches, "Who cares what the Indians are called? They are all right, so long as they have enough to eat and a chance to educate themselves." I may be wronging him in this but in any case there are a great many of this opinion, that it really does not matter after all what they are called. Of course in writing as I have, I want to lead you and everybody else to look at things from a different aspect. They are not Pagans, but short of offering myself for election in order to be able to speak on this point at the present moment I see no very great prospect. Those who know me may smile at the idea of my becoming a member of parliament but stranger things than this have happened and should I attain this position this would be my objective. There is no doubt that this is a pity. Would any member of Parliament take up this matter?

May I refer the reader to an earlier paragraph in this writing where I was speaking of the revelation granted to Christians and comparing that revelation with that given to Indians saying further that we recognize in ourselves many things which are contrary to our reason, accepting them as true without anything in the way of evidence.

A friend of mine has advised me to elaborate somewhat and discuss this idea of mine for the reason that it is very metaphysical and worthy of a great deal of reflection. I do not think that it is necessary for my purpose at the present to take his advice.

There is no intention on my part of leading you into any field of doubt and speculation such as all thoughtful men are bound at one time or the other to cross. I am no exception to the rule. Doubts have and even now harass me. That is my misfortune.

A few sentences about the superstructure of the edifice of the belief of these Pagans might now be appropriate. I think it would be the better way for me to say what I know about Matchee Manitou by speaking as a Pagan Indian.

I know and I believe that there are many evil spirits and I only name one, Matchee Manitou. He is the little spirit because Kitchee Manitou is greater perhaps than any others of his class. He can interfere with my life only in such degree as I may permit him to do so myself and he also is in subjugation to Kitchee Manitou, that is if I do wrong I do so with my own eyes open and I do not blame anyone or any spirit. I do not use the name of Matchee Manitou for cursing or banning, neither did I use the name of Kitchee Manitou for blessing. The dominion of Matchee Manitou is in those parts of the creation which are in darkness, in the daytime when the sun shines. Into these parts I shall never wander if I live according to the rules of Kitchee Manitou. Therefore, I have no fear of bad consequences to me in the next world. If I fall into wrong I can never be lost eternally. The proportion of Kitchee Manitou's spirit which was entrusted to me when I was born can never be lost forever. There is no fear in me in my relationship to Kitchee Manitou at all events, as it is by loving his idea and doing my best to be a good brother to my fellow creatures that I shall complete the circle on which both creator and created exist."

Everybody knows and has heard of the happy hunting ground. It is the ambition of all the red men to attain to it. The fact of this simile being so well known is proof

enough that it is a very excellent synonym for heaven. The happy hunting ground of course means the place where man will enjoy his life to the uttermost. The happy hunting ground means plenty for the dependents of every man for it is only in such a country that his wife and family and all that he loves are likely to be in a position to have all their desires gratified.

## CHAPTER VI

It is now time for me to summarise and then conclude this part of my labor. In my disconnected and jerky way I have endeavored to set forth the facts which have struck me as being salient. I will not attempt to reduce this religion to the formula of a creed. As Mr. Grubb of Regina has already stated, in the primitive church there were no schisms, no heresies, until the formulation of a creed was determined upon. In this religion that we are considering there was no creed definitely stated, there was no order of clergy as every man ministered to his brother man. The first priest may have gained his ascendancy over the minds of his hearers through the agency of their fears, aided by the gift of oratory and being possessed it may be of a strong, magnetic personality, this first priest must have assembled the nucleus of an audience which in course of time might spread over a very extended area but among the Crees and Blackfeet although some noted speaker of the tribe might be chosen as praying man, yet, he is in no sense a priest. Put shortly, each man is equal in Kitchee Manitou's sight. And then again the curious idea of trading being a sin which you will find stated in an earlier paragraph, shows clearly that a very perfect Socialism existed up to within sixty years ago. Any man who had too many blankets, that is more than he needed for himself and his family, committed a crime should he endeavor to trade those blankets to some other Indian who had none, but who on the other hand might have something which the owner of the blankets needed. The spirit of commercialism had never invaded these Indians. With the advance of civ-



ilization of course all the Indians' pre-conceived ideas have suffered a very sudden overthrow, and he has not yet recovered from the state of sullen apathy into which such a revolution as has taken place would throw the most enlightened nations of Europe today. My summary must be as brief as possible:

1.—Kitchee Manitou is the Creator, the Originator and the Destination of everything I see and touch.

2.—Matchee Manitou is co-existent with Kitchee Manitou, in strict subjugation, with power to do evil only when permitted by Kitchee Manitou in the first place and by sinful man in the second place.

3.—Kitchee Manitou sends every man a mediator who is the proper mediator for that man and that man only. The mediator is indicated to mankind by dreams.

4.—I dream of a snake, my petitions to Kitchee Manitou must be addressed to the spirit of a snake for presentation to Kitchee Manitou. I dream of a rock, my petitions to Kitchee Manitou must be presented by the spirit of a rock. I dream of a living man and I must not use that dream as one sent from Kitchee Manitou to me as my mediator. I dream of an animal, or being other than a man, and I must first make sure that the thing I dream of is now dead before that spirit can be accepted by me as Kitchee Manitou's mediator for me.

5.—I address no prayers to the sun as to Kitchee Manitou the sun is his most wonderful creation and greatest gift to the world.

6.—In the Northern Lights I see the spirits dancing for the pleasure of Kitchee Manitou. (Here I would ask pardon for one moment while I point out the extreme beauty of this belief or superstition. Next time the Northern Lights are beautifying the whole heavens as they do in Regina, call to mind the idea of the Pagan Indian lying upon his breast in the grass, observing the marvellous colors and reflecting

that the spirits of those dear departed whom he loved are not only dancing in the presence of Kitchee Manitou for his pleasure and for their own but by the great benevolence of Kitchee Manitou mortal man is permitted to view afar off this grand spectacle.)

7.—I must not murder my friend but I may kill my enemy without committing a sin.

8.—I sin when I do what is unnatural and when I wrong my brother by trickery to take away his goods.

9.—I see no harm in polygamy. A man may divorce his wife with appeal to the judgment of any man.

10.—The greatest punishment for any crime I commit in this life is to be banished from my own tribe.

Now, in conclusion let this suffice for my summary. Explanations and elaborations might be made to fill many a volume but I only speak of those things which I know to be true and if I am wrong in any of my conclusions it is not because of the basic facts themselves, of which you will notice I present very few, but because I may have been misled.

As you all know, an Indian is a very unsatisfactory man to question upon his religion because at this date he has been interrogated so frequently that he has conceived the idea that information so eagerly sought for must be of monetary value. Therefore he will laugh inquiries away; sometimes he will lie directly in order to throw off the persistent inquiries which many have made.

During my wanderings through Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan it is only by the comparison of frequently made statements that I have been able to say this or that is a Pagan belief or not. Now one of my best informants upon this subject is a gentleman whose name I give, a half-breed who speaks three languages and was educated in the States, having been adopted by a Montana sheriff when a small boy. His mother was a Cree woman and his father

was a Britisher. When Mr. Bangs was born his parents resided on the Seekaskootch reserve. They moved to Saddle lake and there Mr. Bangs, the elder died. It was during a trip of mine down the Saskatchewan River in the old Edmonton ferry scow, where I worked at one end of the scow with John Bangs at the other, that I first found out a few things which corroborated some of the ideas that I had already gained by my inquiries and therefore am greatly indebted to Mr. Bangs in the production of this statement.

Now, I have paid this tribute, I want to say that I state this religion, but I do not advocate it. I want also to add that in theosophy I find a great deal of comfort. Theosophy of course means divine wisdom. There are many men theological students of Universities the world over, who will pick many a flaw in these statements of mine. I have never been, strictly speaking, a theological student. At Trinity College, Dublin, where I am now an under-graduate of one year's standing, I read with the intention of going to Sandhurst and eventually into the British Indian army. Typhoid fever and illness at the age of seventeen when I left Trinity College, upset all my plans and those of my father, Sir Henry Stokes. Therefore you will see that I introduced this personal piece of history only in order to advance a reason why it is that I cannot in a more adequate manner present the many and glorious beauties of this marvellous belief held so sacredly through, who shall say how many centuries by these so much despised Indians. Dirty in their practices they sometimes are today. They are still magnificent in their physique, capable after their thirty years of teaching in trade of over-reaching the very smartest of the free fur-traders. They are indeed men of intellect. They can hold their own today even in such matters as belong to the calling of a fur-trader, one of the most difficult businesses for a white man to make money at. The fur trader sets out to beat the

Indian, gets beaten himself and then returns to civilization, trying all the time to prove that the Indian is a bigger thief than himself, which is hard.

How is it that they have preserved their religion immaculate so long? It is only by tradition. Traditions are sacredly guarded by the mothers, the young are instructed by them always and in the majority of cases in the presence of either the father or some bystander; thus there is little or no danger of anything being told to the Indian which has not formerly been told to the bystander who overhears the instruction. I would in this way prefer a belief which we receive by tradition rather than by any written document which might become mutilated or separated from its context. In holy writ itself you may find flat and direct contradictions as for instance, where it says in one place where a fool must be answered according to his folly and in another place "answer not a fool according to his folly. I do not attack Holy Scriptures on this account however, because it is not the letter of the scriptures but the Spirit we ought to take as our guide.

I have already asked at the beginning of this writing that any person who may have a positive fact in his possession I have not recorded here would communicate with me direct so that by this mutual collation fuller statement may be obtained for the benefit of humanity at large. All creeds, all beliefs, all opinions are worthy of record as an indication not only of the workings of the human mind but also as showing symptoms of the mental conditions of the people holding them. Now I have finished the religious part of my writing.

## The Parson and the Plasterer

Whether the following story is true or not I cannot say myself, because I was not an eye witness, but the Hudson Bay factor who told it to me swore that everything in it was true and he was corroborated with great glee by his clerk.

The Parson is a man that I sympathize with entirely so far as this story is concerned, because he did just what I should have been likely to do myself had I been placed in the same awkward position.

The plasterer, whom I met afterwards, was a white man, of very thin and meagre proportions, with a weedy beard and a rather craven manner as I thought, but this impression of mine may have been gained by the fact that I saw him at a time when he was not at his best. Poor beggar!

Some years before I came on the scene he had married a squaw on the reserve where this parson was a missionary. In course of time the union was blessed with three nice little children and the family lived very contentedly. The wife and children were warmly dressed and they appeared to want for nothing in particular. Although I never saw nor even heard of this plasterer plastering, still he managed, I suppose to get in a little money by working around whenever anybody was building a shack or perhaps he got a little money by working for the Indian Agent when a skilled man was required in the course of erection of the agency buildings.

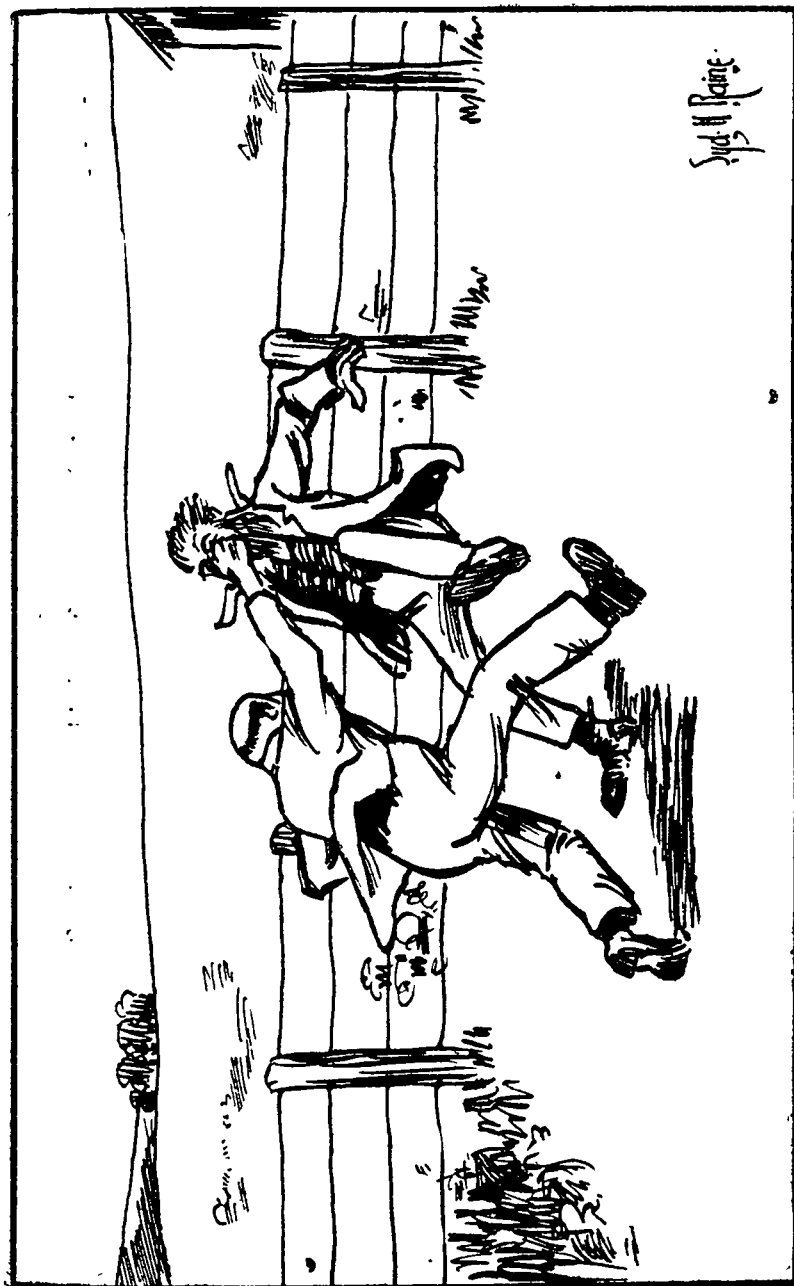
However, in the year of the Klondike rush Mr. Plasterer became fired with the ambition that he would one day be rich and nothing would do but he must pull up stakes and strike out for the gold fields of which he had heard such glittering

stories. I expect he had never seen much gold in his life. He was of Canadian parentage I believe, where they use the dollar bills, so gold, I am afraid, was a total stranger to this man, except perhaps in jeweller's windows, or in the possession of somebody else. All the more reason why the poor Mr. Plasterer was dazzled by the tales which he heard, and struck out for the upper waters of the Liard River to prospect.

He left his wife and kids well provided for. The wife of course, through the kindness of the Dominion Government received her rations as a member of the tribe but the children were all taken into the Parson's boarding school where they remained, I suppose, about eighteen months. They were well fed and well clothed while there and as there were prayers at least five times a day, interspersed with hymn singing as a recreation, they must have received considerable religious education. In fact, as an Indian of the same reserve said to me once, he was quite tired of going to the agency because while there, there was always somebody preaching to him.

They do over-do it, right or wrong. The children certainly got almost an overdose of religion. Of course, I could not tell the Parson this, but the Hudson Bay factor agreed with me thoroughly, pointing to his own case for a reason of his present unregenerate position; his parents had done the same thing. "Long prayers" he said, "when they wakened in the morning, long graces before and after each meal, prayers when sleepy and longing for bed, long prayers before he got into bed, made him so that at the age of twenty-one he could hardly pray at all." Lamentable, isn't it?

However, at the end of eighteen months, Mr. Plasterer returned, having found no gold but not much poorer than when he went away and only richer by having seen some very marvellous scenery and having had a glorious summer time and not too hard a winter.



HE LANDED ON THE LEFT EYEBALL OF THE ASTONISHED PLASTERER

Restored to the bosom of his family, after a day or two's conversation with his wife about all the things that had occurred, he hitched up his team and drove her over to the Mission School to get his children. Arrived there, about 1 o'clock, just after dinner, his children were brought to him by the missionary himself.

This story is one that relates to matters not generally touched upon but as I proceed, you will notice how extraordinarily ridiculous little things are. The fond parent stooping to kiss his little girl of about, I suppose, five years old, recoiled in horror and amazement. He called the Parson to his side and said: "Look here, my children are neglected and they are dirty." Wasn't that a dreadful charge before the whole school. Poor Parsons. I do not blame him if he denied indignantly that any such a charge could possibly be true.

A desperate, wordy war then ensued between the Plasterer and the Parson. The Plasterer to settle the matter turned to one of the white, lady workers in the mission and asked her to fetch a fine toothed comb. He thereupon offered ocular demonstration. This so enraged Mr. Parson that with wild whoop he jumped into the air, cracked his heels together twice before landing on the left eye-ball of the astonished plasterer such a beautiful blow as to roll him underneath the fence into the potato patch.

Mr. Parson was strutting around, quite proud of this performance, while his excited wife called out from the door-way where she was observing proceedings, "Well done, give him some more, go it old man," clapping her hands, regardless of hair pins falling with flying apron, and utterly forgetful of everything except that her Parson was a warrior.

So encouraged, the worthy Parson went under, over or through the fence aforesaid, seized the poor man whose mouth was already full of mud and proceeded to excavate the pota-



toes with his nose, holding him face downwards upon the ground. There was not much chance for the Plasterer's voice to be heard, but what was audible to the bystanders was a stream of pure and profound profanity which has seldom been equalled. The voice of the man of God was also raised whether in blessing or cursing I cannot say, because I was not there. I trust that he was blessing something but according to the Hudson Bay Factor I should say it wasn't very likely. He "pranced on the prostrate abdomen, and howled himself hoarse."

However, as I have said, any man in his position probably would have acted a good deal worse than he did.

If Mr. Plasterer had been anything but a plasterer, he would have taken the parson to one side privately and spoken to him as strongly as he wished to do without making public accusations.

Thus terminated the celebrated battle which is still laughed at and spoken about in the settlement. The Hudson's Bay clerk seemed to get most comfort from the fact that it was evident that a parson is as likely to get mad as he was or any other man. . It certainly must be a consolation to the sinner to find that our clergy are human like himself.

After this Mr. Plasterer fell upon his wife's neck and joined his lamentations and tears to hers. She, poor woman, during the rumpus could only hold her three children in her embrace. Then the family went up to the Hudson's Bay store and to the honor of the Plasterer be it recorded that the first thing he asked for was cedar oil, red precipitate and carbolic soap and then only did he ask for cotton batting, vaseline and hot water with which to treat his now almost invisible eye.

The Plasterer had not such great cause of gratitude to the Parson as might be supposed at first glance, because the Government paid the Parson the usual grant for half breeds at

that time and as for the clothing and board the whole mission was supported by voluntary contributions.

I feel sure that Mr. Parson's feelings will not be greatly hurt by this recital because although he is a Scotchman, his sense of humor has been developed by many a curious experience since he first left Kildonan. I say he was a Scotchman because his parents were so. They say "Once a bartender always a bar-tender." The same applies to the Scotch.

I do not tell this story in any spirit of malice, but merely as an historian. If this Parson had heard the story told about anybody else I feel sure he would be one of the first to laugh at it. He is a man of wonderful strength of character and with a marvellous gift of organization.

## Knocking Around

To begin in the usual manner, this story of "Knocking Around" I was born in the town of Madras, Hindostan. I was educated at Clifton College, Bristol and other schools and at seventeen years of age entered Trinity College, Dublin. Having taken one year by lectures my health broke down and my father decided that out-door life was the only one for me and therefore set me to learn farming in Devonshire and in Scotland.

Having completed about five years learning farming I was ready to sail for Canada. To my shame be it said I learned more about fishing and shooting than I did of scientific agriculture. But I did learn to ride, shoot and tell the truth. I went in chiefly for sheep, but since arriving in Canada, I can safely say that I have never touched a sheep. My education therefore for farming in this country was not very advantageous to me, but, was a strong and healthy fellow enough, but really I knew nothing whatever of the value of money.

I remember trying to earn enough to pay for a three-pound gun license in Scotland, and having hoed turnips at one penny half-penny per one hundred yards lineal. When I had made twenty-two and sixpence in a week's work, I wrote to my poor grandmother who brought me up in County Kerry, proud of myself. I received a letter enclosing a cheque for three pounds and an order to stop immediately disgracing the family!

I landed in Calgary in July, 1892, and my first proceeding was to buy a horse and saddle from Carson the saddler. If I can keep from talking horse throughout this narrative you

will be lucky. For some years I used to talk about little else. However, this one horse was a good one and carried me well. I named him Punch on account of his figure but often wondered why he dwindled so fast behind the saddle. He used to walk flat footed five and a half miles an hour and never worried me about his manger either.

Next morning I set out for a ranch owned by a man who married a relative of mine, away down the Bow River

Arrived there safely, I went to my roll at the back of the saddle and found only two flannel shirts left. My silver monogrammed hair brushes were gone with tooth-brush likewise and I trust the cannibalistic badger who got my ivory shaving brush was choked and is dead and buried long ago. That night I saw my first Indian, except the horn sellers of the C.P.R. platforms.

It was the year of the small-pox in Calgary and this relative of mine, wishing to get rid of those two Indians, pointed to his face, exclaiming "matoxy." The Indians whirled their horses and disappeared as if they had seen a ghost. I didn't think much of my relative for lying like that and I was disgusted. However, I went on to Namaka, to the Sir Leicester Kay Colonization farm where I struck a job and worked there till Christmas, picking up as much Black-foot as I could manage to learn.

I next herded cattle on the Black-foot reserve the rest of an awful winter, but I did not get intimate with any Indians. Next spring, at Langdon, I and another fellow had to drag harrow, twice to a place, a whole section of land, which soon made me very tired. As I had lots of money I therefore bought four horses and went into Calgary. After four hours in a barber's shop I set out to trade. I got skinned. I kept one which I own to-day if he is alive. This was my favorite horse and I cannot help feeling lonely whenever I think of Baldy. I broke him to polo afterwards. I picked up many

a small race on his honest back. He was not big enough for steeple-chasing, so I bought another horse named Pedro, and went on a little circuit with him. I bought a team, hired a driver and jockey who both brought their own saddle horses. I backed my horse and paid all bills. In two months time I had to retire to the North Fork of High River for peace, retrenchment and reform. Here I first met the Mountain Stonies. I was much astonished at a neighbour of mine lending a Mountain Stoney a beautiful double-barrelled express rifle, and said, "You will never see that rifle again," but next spring the Indian returned with three fine sheep heads as a present and the rifle in spotless condition. This made me think how many white men would have acted as well. In the same fall I drove two black bulls from Calgary to Morley, crossed the Bow at the agency, and returned to Calgary with a cow and calf for a Calgary dairyman. A very deadly trip it was as we were wet all the time.

Leaving High River, I went to Sheep Creek, took rooms in Deane Freeman's house and invested in steers. While at Sheep Creek I had but little intercourse with Indians. There was no reserve very near except that of the Sircees, and as I could not get even started at learning their language I learned nothing about them. My business prospered and after about five years I sold out about eighty-five head of four-year-old steers. Deane Freeman was a fine fellow and the best wing shot I ever saw.

I had once in the meantime visited the Blood Reserve, and was so interested by these fine people that I remained there for three weeks, meeting some very interesting Indians. Speaking Blackfoot a little as I did, I managed to convey my meaning as a rule and was forever asking questions, but receiving information, mostly I will say contradictory. One remark of a Chi-ki-na-kwan I remember. He said in perfect English that a Blood Indian he was born and a Blood Indian

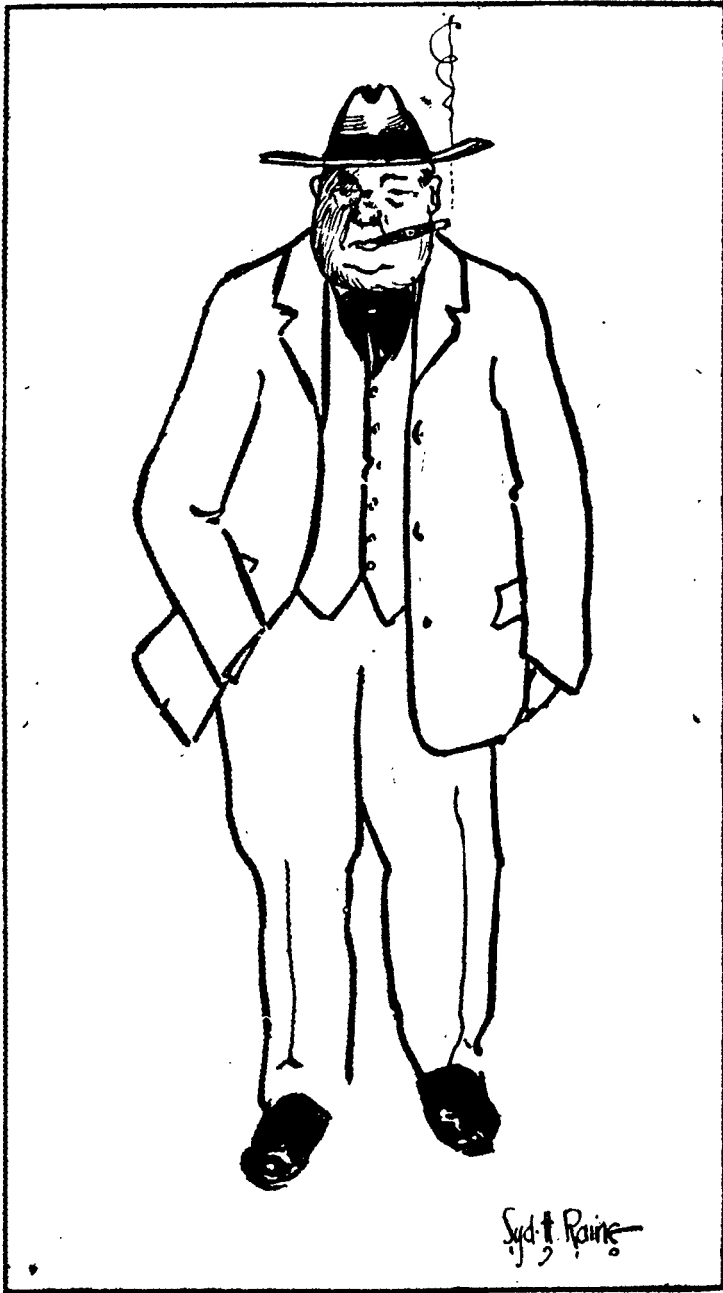
he was proud to remain, adding, that he would never give up his Indian customs for, said he, "I do not see that the white man's ideas are much better than mine." I agreed with him, for he was a sincere and honorable man.

I could not get an opportunity of visiting the Flatheads of the Kootenay country.

Leaving Calgary the year of the Klondike rush, I took the train with the intention of starting a tobacco store in Edmonton. On the train I met a horseman named Bell Irving, and having talked horse most of the way up he said to me, "Why not start a bowling alley in Edmonton?" I fell in with the idea, and next morning we both deposited \$500, and in the course of the day I had secured an excellent lot next to the Queen's Hotel, and had given contract for the erection of a large building. With bowling alley, shooting gallery, tobacco store—which business I also invested in for my own—and also space rented for a barber shop, money fairly poured into my coffers. Games and gambling were ever my delight. The latter never was and never will be my ruin, for I believe I am about "square with the game," especially in view of the fact that I once cleaned up the whole of Okotoks racecourse with a mare whose name was Maud, borrowed for the occasion from Millar of Millarville, on whom may my blessing descend.

I denied myself nothing. Whatever I wanted I bought, and when the boom in Edmonton broke, along with most of the people who had originated it, I paid off Bell Irving and left for Fernie, British Columbia, then about at the head of construction in the Crow's Nest Pass, made another pot of money with another bowling alley, but there was nothing in Fernie but mud, miners and mechanics.

Here I met a hangman, and a very decent, inoffensive poor devil he was. They said he was crazy, but that has been said very often about myself, and the two statements are



THE THIRD HANGMAN

about equally untrue. Having now got on the subject of hangmen, inadvertently as it were, I may say that my first hangman was a respectable citizen of Calgary who hanged the murderer of poor Sergeant Wilde. I helped this hangman to recapture his tame timber wolf, and when he afterwards set up a restaurant in Calgary we ranchers and bull-whackers enjoyed many a good meal in the small hours at the hangman's.

The third hangman whom I met in this country was an educated and polished "Ammurrikin" gentleman who was sub-editor of the Edmonton Post. I never knew he was a hangman until one afternoon when he remarked to a Montana friend of his: "Say, see that fat old fellow passing by, don't he remind you of Poor Jake?" The other man agreed, and Mr. Sub-editor said: "Didn't we have a deuce of a time hanging old Jake?" He was not humbugging me, for he had been a sheriff in Montana, and being unable to hire a hangman, had put through the job himself.

Just a few words to say that in 1897, I went to Vancouver Island for three months, to recuperate after an attack of rheumatism. I met no Indians who interested me. They have been studied for generations. The Ethnological Society will inform you that the skull of a British Columbia Indian, is longer, measured from the eyebrows to the nape of the neck than that of the plains Indian, showing that the British Columbia Indian is a man who has developed a larger brain because he has always worked for his living.

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Did you ever meet a poetaster who can refrain from quoting, especially from his own doggerel? I am afraid I cannot, and so I give you "The Sucker's Lament," which was published in the Calgary Herald, and written in Duncans, B. C.



## THE SUCKER'S LAMENT.

(By one who was there.)

You get upon the Pullman car to ride a little way,  
They're looking out for suckers all the time,  
You meet a pleasant mannered man who wishes you "Good  
day,"

But he's looking out for suckers all the time.  
Don't you hate this railway travelling? Let us play a little  
while

At pedro, euchre, poker, in a very modest style.  
But he'll touch you for your boodle in a way that stirs your  
bile,

For he's looking out for suckers all the time.

And all of us must know the man how fluently he talks,  
Who's looking out for suckers all the time.

You meet him on the sidewalk with his pocket full of rocks,  
He's looking out for suckers all the time.  
He'll sell you just a fifteenth share, a millionaire you'll be,  
The rocks are full of shining gold, and full of gall is he,  
But the mine you can't discover for 'tis in the clouds you see,  
He's looking out for suckers all the time.

The eighteen ninety-seven girl's a giddy little thing,  
But she's looking out for suckers all the time.

Just go down to a music hall and there you'll hear her sing,  
She's looking out for suckers all the time.

While basking in her sunny smile all prudence you will sink,  
She promises to love you, but my friend what do you think?  
She gets a small percentage on each glass of beer you drink;  
She's looking out for suckers all the time.



HE'S LOOKING OUT FOR SUCKERS ALL THE TIME .

There are men in cattle raising—yes in every business too—  
 Who're looking out for suckers all the time;  
 They'll beat you of your eye teeth—you can't tell what to do,  
 They're looking out for suckers all the time.  
 They'll take your blessed little all, until they've got their fill;  
 'Twould make the angels shudder just to figure up the bill,  
 And His Satanic Majesty is on the rustle still,  
 He's looking out for suckers all the time.

There were no Indians in this part of my life, but my greatest amusement was that of writing whenever I could get a chance of getting my stuff accepted. My most famous production is one that I am now ashamed of, but as an illustration of my then state of mind I will give it. It appeared in the famous Eye-Opener, and the highest praise I received from anybody about the matter was from Bob Edwards himself, who said that it was the blankety blankiest thing he ever read.

## THE JASPER HOUSE BRIGADE.

The noble corps of bummers has been mobilized at last,  
 And if you want to join us come a-running very fast,  
 The Jasper's our headquarters, come and do not be afraid,  
 To qualify is easy for the Jasper House Brigade.  
 Sometimes a stranger happens round who's got a little dough,  
 Right to the bar we follow just to warm ourselves you know,  
 And stand around and rubberneck—indeed 'tis truly said,  
 We're terrors all for free drinks in the Jasper House Brigade.

When a boarder buys some T. & B. just see us crowd around  
 With mouths agape like fishes when they're landed on the  
 ground;  
 We've knives and pipes and matches, but I'm very much  
 afraid

That no one buys tobacco in the Jasper House Brigade.  
Now when you go to bed to rest, you musn't mind at all,  
If up against your door at night a drunkard chance to fall;  
And if upon his stomach all his liquor has not stayed—  
That don't agitate a member of the Jasper House Brigade.

If the ladies all despise you and you've got more gall than  
"n.n.n,"

Come quickly to the Jasper House and you'll have lots of fun.  
You're qualified to figure in the daily great parade,  
Of the Stony Busted Bummers in the Jasper House Brigade.

When the bowling alley was wound up I, in a weak moment, thought I should like to go in for the fur trade, and accordingly in my usual impetuous style bought eight or ten horses. I went off to trade west of Edmonton along the road towards Jasper Pass. I never got very far into that country. However the only interesting thing to me still was the opportunity of inquiring about the Indians, and their beliefs in regard to religion. About the fur trade I may say that it resulted in my case at the end of eighteen months in my being absolutely broke and having nothing left of my pack train, furs, etc., except only one good tepee and my health and spirits. My horses were stolen by a white man in my employ.

Hiring a shack in the outskirts of Edmonton I pitched my teepee outside to the indignation of the neighbors, and whistled for a wind. That winter I bought whitefish. I peddled riveted machines. I canvassed for the Edmonton Post. I worked as a laborer in the street, moved buildings for Mr. Sam McCauley. In fact the only honest money I ever refused was when the chief of police offered me a job, \$1.75 a day cleaning crossings. This money I refused and I was wrong in doing so, for I owed a board bill at the time. I got a contract to build seven miles of fencing near Buffalo Lake

east of Innisfail, \$112 a mile, all poplar. It was completed in five weeks and on returning to Edmonton I became an architect's clerk! This was a rotten job. However, I left Edmonton in company with an ex-organist of the Presbyterian Church to go down the Saskatchewan in a boat. I said to myself, "Here I am, thirty-five years old, no trade, no occupation, nothing gained but experience," and I felt very much ashamed at the opportunities wasted and the assinine manner in which I had conducted myself since leaving dear old Ireland. My father made me during all these years a handsome allowance.

We had a most disastrous trip down the Saskatchewan. Leaving there in June on the top of the flood, I had intended to go to Fargo, in North Dakota, there to study telegraphy, so that at last I might have a trade. My companion split his big toe with an axe at Moose Creek, and through lack of attention or I hardly know the real reason, he took septic fever and nearly died at Onion Lake, where I managed to convey him with great difficulty. Having stayed with him and nursed him for five weeks, we left for Battleford on a scow with a team of horses, a team of oxen and a lot of shingles and hard wood, consigned to the Industrial School at Battleford. Do you think I will ever forget the sweeps on that scow, and how the white man who was with us fell asleep with his hands and feet touching the deck, hanging over the handle? Dried beef was our only victual, but a chunk of it used to last me as long as a stenographer's chewing gum.

We worked like slaves, but we stuck above Bresaylor so hard and fast that we could not budge the scow. We made a bridge and landed the livestock. I sent the white boy off for help. While he was gone an enterprising Indian who was rafting logs down to Prince's mill came along and stuck on the same sandbar. We floated his logs and he floated our scow, so at last we made Battleford. I was almost blind from inflamma-

tion set up in my eyes by the dazzle of the water. Snow blindness contracted in my first winter is one bad legacy which remains to me after my useless and roving life. However, I always thank the Lord for my Irish disposition, which enables me to throw off trouble and laugh at misfortunes. Arrived in Battleford, I bought a horse and returned to Onion Lake to teach in the Industrial School. This job never materialised, but after three weeks cooking in the mission hay camp, I made an agreement with the Government operator that he would teach me telegraphy. After six months, I suppose being sick of my society, this gentleman told the Superintendent of Telegraphs at Qu'Appelle that I was a first-class operator, and he in turn notified Superintendent Milestone. Milestone wired for me to start at once for Moose Jaw, and this awful trip is told in my succeeding Starvation Story.

Arrived in Moose Jaw I was soon spotted as a beginner and was sent to Whitewood at the magnificent salary of \$25.00 a month and board myself. I worked in various freight sheds faithfully going back every night to write down scattered letters which I was able to catch from the sounder.

After five years on the Canadian Pacific Railway, wishing to get married, I left and went to Winnipeg to learn stenography. At the Winnipeg Business College I succeeded in my object, but the course of four months cost me \$408.50. However, on coming to Regina, Mr. Stocks immediately put me to work in the Survey Branch of the Government of the then North-West Territories, and here I am to-day. Done with stenography, thank heaven, but every fall and every spring I can scarcely hold down my job. Restless and longing for a canoe, for the camp-fire, for the smell of the willows in the springtime, or the bite of the stirrups on my boots. It is as much as I can possibly do to stay on such a bald and barren-looking plain as that on which the City of Regina stands. The only scenery here is wheat and dirty grass. I said at the

beginning that this was the story of knocking around, but I must not knock Regina any more than this, for I have a little money locked up in city property.

I have written this sketch of my travels which have been, you will observe, mostly on horseback or by water, in order to show you how it was I came to gain the knowledge which enabled me to write the first part of this volume.

I have made a list of fourteen different occupations which I have followed, thirteen of them turned out failures in the end, either because I did not stick to them long enough or because I had not sense enough to know when I was well off.

With only one trip to the Old Country in all this time I find myself an old-timer with excellent manners, but no time to use them. They say you cannot spoil a bad egg. Wild I was no doubt, but how could an Irishman help that? Anyway I'm glad to be able to say that I never won another man's money by tricks or by lying.

## A Starvation Story

Patsy Carroll was a very good friend of mine; an ex-sergeant of police and author of a famous ballad about Superintendent Johnny Cotton.

"Who always packed his nose-bag wherever he might go." Carroll was good to me in every way. He was an Irishman like myself and still further, a grand uncle of my own was the family physician at the time when Patsy was first paraded before the delighted eyes of the people of Mullingar. He and I batched it together for about three weeks in the spring of 1900, while I was learning telegraphy.

It was while seated in his house one night (there was no starvation there, for Patsy was forehanded in the matter of grub) that I got the telegram from Supt. Milestone to go to Moose Jaw without delay. This was a great shock to me for it was the first I had heard of Milestone and I had never applied for any job. However I made up my mind to go and see Milestone in any case so next morning Carroll hitched up the Government horse and kindly drove me towards Onion Lake. The roads were very soft and progress was slow, for the horse being a Government horse, of course struck into the Government gait. I need say no more about how fast or how slow we travelled.

East of Frog Lake we were over-taken by a band of Indians I got out of Carroll's rig and hired a pony. In endeavoring to climb to the hurricane deck of this cayuse the buckskin stirrup leather broke. I asked Carroll to give me a leg up and in his eagerness to help me he spilt me into my hat on the



other side of the road on which his attention had been fixed ever since we halted. However, I reached Onion Lake about 12 o'clock, with a stiff neck.

Here, I hired a rig from Mr. Matheson and in about two hours time I was ready, with all my traps packed, to kiss goodbye to all and sundry in Onion Lake. You will understand I was busy with baggage for the greater proportion of the two hours' time. So away I went, about half past two or so and driving all the afternoon we reached Tongue Creek. Here the Government Bridge gang had taken out the bridge for some mysterious reason, leaving only one timber on the caps. There was no one in sight and the river had already broken up. I sat down by the creek, took off my leather boots and put on my mocassins. I had to leave all my belongings, which I might say I did not see again for many moons.

It was a long tramp to Jack Fish Lake and a hungry one but having run the risk of a pack of half breed dogs at a half breed's house at 11 o'clock at night, I camped. Next day, again hiring a rig I left for Battleford about 6 o'clock a.m. Then my real troubles began.

On reaching the Saskatchewan, opposite the town of Battleford, there were 15 feet of water between the shore and the nearest stranded cake of ice. However, I said to my driver "I suppose I'll get across somehow" and I paid him off and was left alone. Alone I said, but I never felt alone as long as my hound, dear old Jim, was with me. This dog was at one time as famous and as notorious perhaps as myself. A grandson of champion Leprechaun, weighing 100 pounds, he was a shocking wicked fighter. He was my darling above all animals that ever I owned or saw. He is now dead having picked up a poisoned wolf bait.

Jim and I set off in the evening having had nothing to eat since 5 a.m. that day to look for shelter for the night. A mile

or so up the river I found a house, locked and barricaded but we got in and went to bed. The owner of the house, whom I afterwards met in Battleford, had evidently left some weeks before, for nothing in the grub line could we find except about 3 inches square of green bannock and of evaporated apples two table-spoonfuls. I ate the apples and Jim the bread.

However, next morning, I returned to the old ferry landing, found a quantity of oats which had been left, I suppose, by some teamster waiting for the ferry steamer. I ate a great many of these oats and suffered accordingly. All this time I could just make my voice carry across the river, where there were many half-breeds, Indians, etc., to be observed but not a man would cross to fetch me. Signs, both Indian and white, I used until my arms ached. What sign to make for a dollar I could not determine, but I tried to convey my meaning by holding up my ten bones but it was no use. For \$10 no one would fetch me. All day I stayed on the shore until the approaching darkness warned me. I walked back along the Edmonton trail about eight miles until at last I saw a light. Arrived there, I found an Indian boy who himself was out of grub. It was the last straw. Next day however, the Indian on his horse set off and soon returned with some flour. Flour and water fried, without grease does not make good bread but Jim and I found it very palatable. After our breakfast I walked back again to the ferry landing and at about 5 o'clock in the afternoon two men arrived with a wagon upon which they had a boat. Without a word I walked to the back of the wagon and found a canvas sack which I pulled over the tail board. It looked like a grub sack, so reaching in I found some bread. They asked me was I hungry. I nodded for I was too busy to speak. We boiled a kettle first and I had a meal which you will agree I was in need of. How much I longed for Carroll's hospitality you can hardly perhaps imagine or how deeply and heartily I

cursed Superintendent Milestone's telegram and all in connection therewith, including the bad hour in which I conceived the idea of learning telegraphy.

I could yarn away for an hour or more about Patsy Carroll and the many hearty laughs we had together. There is one of his queer sayings which has stuck in my head and I must give it. Referring to an acquaintance of ours he said, "that fellow is tired and upon my soul he would always be tired, even if he were only growing his beard."

Well, to resume, we had to get across the river. This man who fed me, I forget his name, had to meet a draft in the bank in Old Battleford and so we said we would cross, no matter whether the ice went out as it might do at any moment, or not. We launched the boat and pushed off for the first stranded ice. Before reaching it we were up to our knees in water but we did reach it, and pulled up the boat. Tearing the lining out of our coats, using handkerchiefs and the remainder of my socks we corked the seams as well as we could. Jim left me here for the first and only time in my experience of him. He got one leg through the ice as soon as he started across and on regaining his foothold he put for the opposite shore where he stayed and howled but he did not return.

We pushed the boat along between us being careful to keep a good hand-hold and although we broke through more than once still we just got a bit wet and kept pushing the boat along.

We finally reached the other side where there were about thirty people watching us. My first proceeding was to curse them roundly for a pack of cowards who would not come across the river for \$10.00 to fetch a man evidently in distress.

I may say there were no mounted policemen among them. This would not have stopped me from cursing them but if there had been a policeman there I believe he would have come across.

On going to the old Queen's Hotel in Battleford I got from Champagne 50 cents worth; in fact such a 50 cents worth was never before, or since I expect, handed out of his kitchen. Champagne is now a member of our Dominion Parliament and while in the Provincial Parliament he earned for himself the sobriquet of the "silent member" but he certainly got a lot of work done in Battleford. I have seen him often since then but somehow have not had an opportunity of shaking hands with him.

The remainder of this Starvation Trip of mine by stage to Saskatoon in company with Mr. Clinkskill, was uneventful. Some day maybe, I will spin you another yarn about my experiences.

## Fired and Hired

One lovely morning about four years ago, in the beginning of October, I was sitting in the station at Dundurn with my heels on the telegraph table, busily engaged in helping the agent to meet the south bound train due at 8.35 by watching the track for her smoke.

The agent and I were old friends and fellow sufferers, in that we were both employees of that "heartless corporation" the C.P.R. He was an old hand and good operator, and I was engaged in the somewhat sickening task of lifting myself by my ears out of numerous freight sheds west of Brandon, to the proud position of relieving agent on the old Moose Jaw to Brandon division. Having started at thirty-three years of age at twenty-five dollars per month, and boarded myself, after eighteen months' hard labor I could take train orders and some messages. It was a bit of a jar, therefore, when I suddenly heard our call "R.D" begin to sound at my feet. The agent heard it also, as he was checking a piece of baggage and called out to me:

"Let that son of a moose call, General, he knows the train is coming."

So I let him rattle away, wondering idly if I would ever lose my nickname, "General." At another station a witty drayman once yelled at me through the wicket:

"Here you general freight, baggage and express agent, come and help load them hides."

I endeavored to overwhelm him by striking an attitude and misquoting at him, "So proud shall I be of thy approbation that I shall strike with my head the starred clusters of heaven"

But it was no use, for he drily remarked, "Rats, I don't understand Greek." Poor dear Horace, how I pitied you, for you must have suffered one more pang added to your purgatorial pains. And I was called "General" ever since.

In a weak moment I thought I'd answer Mr. Man, and got a pad of blanks and corked down :

"To Operator Stokes, R.D. Take next train and go to Pilot Butte. Report at my office tonight—Signed C. A. Cotiwell.

This was the new chief dispatcher, so that I had to answer the message quick. I said in about a minute. "He can't take this train, I see her smoke." But it was no use, for the imperious beast replied :

"If he can't take this train, tell him we don't want him at all."

Reluctantly I gave "O.K." thoughtfully signing the agent's initials. I took the train. Everything needful was packed in three minutes, four minutes were devoted to fluent and continuous profanity, and I was bumping towards Regina without any tobacco.

There was no chief dispatcher to meet me, in or out of his horrible office. So to bed I went at the old Windsor, feeling a little comforted by the reflection that I was drawing pay, at all events enough to pay for a John Collins in the morning over and above the hotel bill. Of course I could not run in debt in any case, for I never yet met an operator who had a bar bill, and they knew I was one at the Windsor.

Mr. Cotiwell next morning gave me my instructions, with a second class pass to Pilot-Butte, second class, mind you! I was so lost with astonishment at his sending me, W. E. H. Stokes, colonist class that I paid no attention at all to what he told me. I recovered after a while and found he was saying that he never before came across a worse drilled lot of operators than there were on that division, and he wanted me to show how much above the average I was.

I thought, but did not say:

"You're a hot sort. The first thing you do is to calumniate the operators who are working under you, when as a matter of fact you're probably a mere 'jumped-up' outsider yourself."

I said, but did not think:

"Sir, I can assure you that I shall render the most honest and best service in my power, for I believe you will be a boss after my own heart."

He swallowed it. Yes, he did.

Well, I got out to Pilot Butte that night, quite prepared to follow Cotiwell's instructions. I would have wagered all Lombard Street, London, England, to a china orange that I knew quite as much as he did about box-car stations, so of course his instructions did not amount to a hill of beans anyway, and the fact that I never heard them didn't bother me in the slightest.

Pilot Butte consisted of three elevators, one store, a section house, and the station. The name of the station was too long for the station house, so the sign board stuck out at both sides of the building which looked for all the world like a two handled soup kettle. I was in the soup.

I fell off the train down a ten foot bank, climbed out of the ditch and sat down on the "station" door step. Hurling a parting curse at the grinning baggage man, I took out my key and then surveyed the scene of my future labors. Eight feet square, a wooden bunk, a table, one instrument, in bad order, a broken window and holes in every wall, where the linemen had led wires. They had always used an inch augur. I heard afterwards that a few months before an engine and a car of gravel had struck the station, knocking it off its stilts down the aforesaid bank. This occurred owing to a little oversight. The operator forgot to open the switch to allow a gravel train to come out on the main line. The engine, grav-

el car, operator and station all arrived simultaneously at the bottom of the ditch. The operator only got his worthless leg broken, but the damage done to the station was something pitiable. Despite all that human skill and the bridge and building department could do, the station remained at least ten inches out of the plumb and very decrepit as to its door and window. After pulling this wretched building out of the ditch they had put it gently down on two square timbers and now for my sins I had to live, move and have my being in it.

No stove, no fuel, nothing but the raw October air, pure, bracing, but dreadfully dry. Why people blow so hard about the dryness of our air I never could see. Among operators especially I'm sure that drought is our greatest foe.

I mended the relay with a rubber band and told the dispatcher I was on duty. He didn't seem to mind much, so off I went to look for supper and a bed. Mr. Storekeeper had no bed, but for five dollars a week offered me the best board in that part of the country. I found it good but it was all bacon.

By the time I got back to the station it was raining, with some sleet, and a more miserable night was never spent by yours truly. Putting on two more pairs of socks, my mitts, and another waistcoat, I drew my old Hudson's Bay blanket round my ears, drank the last of my whiskey and went to sleep. At 1.30 I was shivering and awake enough to hear my call going. I poked my hand out and answered the dispatcher. He wanted to know if I could see a train coming west. I said: "Not from here." This was as true as gospel for my window looked the other way and the good old blanket was still in position.

"Tell me when you see her," said he; "may want to give her an order."

This was bad news. I had to get up. Stepping into a pool of water, I lit my lamp, murmuring softly; "Is it worth



forty cents, I wonder?" This was the proper overtime pay—do you think I earned it? No, for after waiting a perishing ten minutes, the dispatcher says "Good night," meaning no sarcasm, but just to let me know I would not be needed. Well, when morning came I was in need of a good night sure enough and felt I was a spectacle for gods and men. I wired Cotiwell for a stove, for fuel, for leave to bank up the station myself, for leave to get some boards and plank up the wall, and at last for leave to go to Regina to see him. He granted the last request. Next day I secured a coal oil can and put stove pipes (borrowed) over a hole in the side of it, made another in the end and proudly lit my "stove." By insinuating chips, bits of ties, and one board on my table top, I managed to get up a heat which enabled me to sleep about two hours at a time. Then I had to forage up and down the track for more fuel. It stopped raining the third morning, but the wind rose. A friend down at Summerberry asked me how I was making it go. I told him the only thing I really needed was a new buck-saw, as I had broken mine sawing off the end of a tie on the main line too close to the fish plate. This was a lie of mine, but the dispatcher heard it, and I fondly hoped to receive a visit from the road master in the morning. The lie was wasted.

Morning brought me no road master, no stove, nothing but an awful wicked storm, which soon covered my telegraph table and fairly made me long to return to my old, warm and comfortable job of handling hides in August at one of my old stations.

It was time to quit. I toughed it out till nightfall and then took the train for Regina. I took eight dollars from an elevator man with three deuces, so that somewhat consoled me for the loss of my station, for I had no leave and didn't expect to come back to Pilot Butte. But I felt poor Cotiwell would be so disappointed that I had failed to distinguish my-

self from the mere ruck of "the worst drilled lot of operators" he had ever seen. This hurt my tender conscience. Just before I left I told the dispatcher that I was "off." He didn't seem to worry, but said:

"Just take this message first," and thereupon he poured a flood of Morse into me so fast that I never wrote a word, except his initials, "B.M." at the end. So I said:

"Well, I want to speak to you."

"Why?"

"You're a bit of a cyclone, aren't you," I wrote. "I feel I cannot do myself justice on the wire, and long to see you face to face. I heard the message, but could not write a word of it. Try again."

He wouldn't send it again, so I left. His telegraphing reminded me of the vulgar little boy who spat over a theatre gallery. For all I knew about it was the "whack" at the end.

The few miles to Regina were soon covered. I felt like the traditional toad under the drag harrow, for with a heavy cold and neuralgia behind my eyes and an ulcerated throat, I was about as happy as you can imagine that toad to have been. The Windsor hotel cad took my baggage, and I staggered to the bar. Hoarsely I called for whiskey, screeching hot, with sugar and lemon. This was all the nourishment I could take, for I wanted a doctor and an English nurse more than my dinner.

Next day at 8 a.m. on going to the station the first man I saw was the third trick dispatcher going off duty.

"Are you not taking this morning's train to Pilot Butte?" he asked.

"You may bet your feet I'm not," says I.

"But Raynoll" (the good old chief who had been shelved in favor of Cotiwell) "has just sent in an engine and crew to Pilot Butte without any orders as to their return."

"Is that possible?" said I, politely.

"You must go and see him at once. Have you quit have you left—are—ar—" here he became absolutely inarticulate.

"I beg your pardon, I said mildly, "I don't quite 13 (understand). If you are curious on the point you must know that I am now in Regina and hope to remain here for a few days. Say, where can I buy some .22 rifle cartridges? There was a wolf on the track last night, and—"

"Go and see the dispatcher immediately."

This was plain enough. So I raised my hat, rubbed my week-old beard, snuffled a little and went.

Dear old Raynoll was a little startled by my unexpected appearance, but kindly consulted me by asking me how he was to get that engine and crew back to Regina.

"Sir," I said "It is a matter of entire indifference to me how the (bad word) you get them back."

Pardon me, reader, but at the time I was sick enough to want to scrap with the entire office full of operators, and was only sorry that no one would tread on my fur coat tail.

"Sit down and wait for Mr. Cotiwell," was the stern command.

His Lordship arrived presently, and we had it out, hot and heavy. My mention of the good old O.R.T. seemed to have a sedative effect, and after about twenty minutes wrangling, the exasperated bounder ordered me to return at three that afternoon, when he proposed to polish me off in style. He said I was fired "for deserting the service," and I was not to dare to raise a disturbance in his office.

Heavens, I cried, "If you would only come to my office at Pilot Butte, sleep there till your nose froze and your whiskers were stuck to the blankets, why you would be welcome to make a disturbance. The worst deal a cur dog ever got is a trifling circumstance compared to the maltreatment you try to give me, W. E. H. Stokes, who has more money and more brains than yourself and thank God is not half so ugly."

Oh, we had a nice talk, but I had gripped 'out both pockets of my coat when I got out of the office, travelling high, wide and handsome. But I had to go, expecting nothing and hoping for nothing, except perhaps that the neuralgia might leave me and that I might sleep about sixteen consecutive hours.

At the Windsor the smiling manager spoke to me over the hall counter, asking me where I was bound for. Passing my forefinger round my hat, I said:

"You can see where my home is, and any old place I can hang it up is home sweet home for me. I'm out of a job and out of everything except my money and my gall."

"Out of a job, are you?" said he. "Well, that's bad. What will you do now?"

"Hunt another, I suppose. I've been fifteen years in this "blawsted" country, and although I can put my all in a gunny sack, I never was stuck yet."

"Well," he grinned at me and went on. "Say, we are nearly stuck right here and now. We cannot get a cook anywhere until Saturday, when a pastry-cook will arrive from Winnipeg. Did you ever do any cooking?"

"Why, of course I did," I cried without thinking. "Cook, is it? In 1903 I cooked for seventeen men, the manager and the manager's wife and family."

This was true and they are alive yet, unless they died from natural causes quite distinct from any cooking of mine. I was only locum tenens while the real cook got over a bout in Calgary.

"Can I cook?" I went on reproachfully. "Anything at all from venison steak or soupka de-boo-e-ong to slapjacks with maple syrup. I can cook all right. Huh, you couldn't play baseball with my biscuits either, don't you make any error."

"Will you take on our job here for a few days then? There

is another man in the kitchen now, and if you will, you can make \$2.50 a day and your board."

"Heavens," I thought, "I shall get fired off the cooking job about as quick as off the old C.P., but they won't fire me till Saturday anyway, and this is Wednesday noon. Blessed if I don't have a shot at it, it will cost less than paying hotel bills, and —and I may at last attain the dignity of a bar bill." This last thought settled it.

"All right," I said. "Nothing can be done now before lunch, so I'll go and get a pair of overalls, and you can put me on the job at one o'clock."

"Very well."

After a nice lunch, preceeded by a decent sherry and bit ters, I felt pretty fairly recovered, my eyes no longer seemed to be burning and the pain in my head was gone. Having invested in a huge pair of bib overalls, accompanied by the manager, I invaded the lower regions. Mr. Manager then showed me the various offices, which I duly admired, and then complimented him on the kitchen range. An array of very greasy German women was somewhat discouraging, however, but my spirits rose at once, when who should I see but F. Polding, an old C.P. dining-car conductor of my acquaintance. He was the other cook. We figuratively fell on each others necks, which seemed to cheer up Mr. Manager a little, for he had been eyeing me for some minutes with increasing doubt. Perhaps, poor man, he expected me to start immediately juggling patty pans and making cream puffs, pies or other trifles light as air in the short space of time we had been together. I will confess I never made an edible pie in all my days, and my bread would not float in High River, when my camp companion, in a rage experimented.

A little chat with Polding soon finished any ambition I had to be a cook at the Windsor, for he thought he was to

help me, and I thought I had to help him. So I chucked my overalls to one side and went off to stroll about town, while waiting for my fateful interview with 'Cotiwell.

It came off on time, and he informed me that I was placed on the extra list. When asked what salary an "extra" operator got, he seemed amused, or amazed, you couldn't say which, for he really was an ugly looking cuss, much more so than I am, and I am no beauty.

He said: "Where shall we find you in case there is a job in sight?"

"I don't know," I said dubiously, "but I have a job now, so it don't matter much."

"You have a job, have you?"

Oh, yes. I have just been engaged as head cook at the Windsor hotel."

Well, if you had seen his face! As for the other operators, they all grinned with their hands in air over the keys, and one fellow in the corner softly clapped his hands and then buried his head in a bunch of car reports lying near him.

"And can we get you again at any time?"

"Depends on my boss."

"Well I say, if you leave Regina where will you go?"

"Think I'll go to Dundurn."

"All right," said he turning away. My right hand went out accidentally, to shake hands and say good-bye but he did not see it, so I waved him a graceful adieu, said "Ta ta" to my brother operators, and—went to explain myself to Mr. Manager. He looked a little gloomy, but soon cheered up. In settling my bill, in a very nice way he allowed me \$1.25 for the overalls, which I refused at first, but he insisted so that I gave way and we parted with I trust, mutual feelings of esteem.

That night I took the main line train east to see an old friend, who by the way was then our local chairman of the

O.R.T. While chatting in the office here comes a wire from the superintendent to Cotiwell:

"Where has Operator Stokes gone? Reply at once."

About half an hour after, we were called again and the night operator received a message from Cotiwell asking if I was there. I sung out from the stove where we were sitting: "Tell him you think I've gone shooting, will you."

He did.

After a few minutes more—not more than time for a couple of horns and a cigarette any way—the Superintendent wires again to Cotiwell:

"Locate Operator Stokes immediately and send him to Balgonie to work nights."

I went to bed.

Next day I wired Cotiwell: "Am suffering from ophthalmic neuralgia. Certificate of Dr. H. to you first mail. Will report when convalescent."

Cotiwell got fired himself shortly after, when I was again working, and serve the poor fool right, I say. I should have liked to see him cooking at all events.

What a narrow escape the Windsor boarders had, Eh, what?

## Public Works Story

Reader, I must apologize. I am restrained by my Oath of Office from telling the Public Works story, which I had prepared for your delectation but I am going to tell one Public Works story in any case and this is the biggest story of them all.

I have contracted writer's cramp from working in the department as an accountant.

Forgive me and farewell.







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